



Department of Public Health Partners with Local School to Protect Student Health

Joint Press Release of the San Luis Obispo County Public Health
Department and the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District

December 5th, 2007

San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department has identified an individual at Paso Robles High School who had contagious tuberculosis (TB). The strain of TB in the individual is a non-drug resistant strain of TB. **No further information regarding the individual will be released to protect patient confidentiality.**

In conjunction with school officials and staff, the Public Health Department is in the process of evaluating all students and staff who may have been exposed. The most common way to become infected with TB germs is by spending a lot of time with a person who has active TB in enclosed spaces.

There is a difference between inactive (Latent) TB infection and TB disease. People with TB disease are sick from the germs that are *active* in their body and they may cough a lot, feel weak, have a fever, lose weight, cough up blood, or sweat a lot at night. People with *active* TB disease are capable of giving the infection to others. People with *inactive* (Latent) TB infection (without disease) have the TB germ in their body, but they are not sick because the germ is *inactive*. They cannot spread the germ to others. About one out of ten people with *inactive* (Latent) TB infections become sick with TB disease. TB can be treated and cured.

Although it may be a new experience for the students, parents and school staff involved, communicable disease investigation is a regular activity for the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department. The current investigation under way is an example of TB case investigation and is an important step in helping prevent the spread of TB. All students and staff who test positive for infection will receive further testing and medication to ensure that they do not develop the *active* form of TB disease.

There will be an informational meeting, including a question and answer period, for

students, parents, school staff and the public on Monday, December 10, 2007 at the Paso Robles High School located at 801 Niblick Rd, in the gymnasium. There will be two sessions. The session will be at 6:00 pm in Spanish, and the second session at 7:00 pm in English. The San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department has a public information line with further information in English and Spanish on TB and TB exposure. The public health information line can be reached at 805 788-2903. The Public Health Department also has further information on their website, at www.slopublichealth.org. The Paso Robles Joint Unified School District has further information at www.pasoschools.org

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